

The

Financial Connection

News You Can Use from the Financial Management Service
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Federal Finance customer relationship managers reach out

By Carolyn Dunston

ARM Division Director

The Agency Relationship Management (ARM) Division is one of 15 new divisions within the **Financial Management Service's** (FMS) Federal Finance area. Federal Finance has realigned programs into strategic business divisions rather than functional divisions.

ARM serves as the central point of contact with customer agencies that interact with Federal Finance collection initiatives such as lockboxes, Pay.gov, and US Debit Card. Existing customer relationships will be nurtured and new relationships developed through timely follow up and a thorough understanding of our customers' processes and business needs. Additionally, ARM will utilize various tools to share information with customers using state-of-the art technology.

ARM also works with FMS collection program areas to resolve complex customer problems, develop customer account strategies and serve as the "voice of the customer" in internal discussions.

Within ARM, customer relationship managers assist agencies, benefit recipients, vendors, financial institutions/agents and other FMS program areas, addressing concerns and helping those unable to identify electronic payments or nonreceipt of a federal benefit, vendor, retirement,

tax refund or miscellaneous payment.

As the team proceeds to meet with customer agencies, a new "holistic approach" will be unveiled. Under this approach, initial meetings will be scheduled at the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) or Deputy CFO level along with representatives from each bureau. The purpose is to discuss the agency's entire cash management portfolio at the department level versus discussing each cashflow individually so that working together, we can improve the agency's cash management practices.

ARM's responsibilities also include producing *The Financial Connection* newsletter, which in March moved from a quarterly print publication to a monthly electronic publication. Each issue is read by more than 1,800 people.

Assistance is only a telephone call or click away! Let ARM be your link to one-stop-shopping to meet your customer service needs.

For more information, contact Carolyn Dunston at (202) 874-7491 or carolyn.dunston@fms.treas.gov.



At your service: The Federal Finance Customer Relationship Management team members are (clockwise from upper left) Gregory Gaines, Peter Moore, Tim Kanaley, Team Leader Karen Price, Director Carolyn Dunston and Felicia Jones.

It's a winning combination: electronic tax filing and direct deposit

By Eleanor Kelly and Shirley Hopkins

As the end of the 2005 tax filing season in mid-October nears, the pace of **Internal Revenue Service** (IRS) federal tax returns and refunds is slowing down, but electronic filing and direct deposit for tax refunds are still available for filers with extensions.

The IRS, a **Financial Management Service** sister bureau with the U.S. **Department of the Treasury**, expected some 10 million taxpayers to file returns after the April 15 deadline this year.

Through early July, the IRS said, the 2005 filing season has set a series of records, highlighted by 67 million tax returns filed electronically—11 percent more than last year. Of these e-file returns, more than 5 million came through the Free File program. Private companies participating in the Free File program offer free return preparation and e-filing services to eligible taxpayers and it is available through mid-October.

This year marks the first time that more than half of all taxpayers have filed electronically, with paper filers in the minority. As of July 8, more than 53 percent have filed electronically. The IRS also reported that direct deposit refunds totaled 51.9 million, up 6.7 percent from the same time period last year.

PAYMENTS

The Financial Connection is published monthly by the Financial Management Service, a bureau of the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Our address is FMS, 401 14th Street SW, Room 304E, Washington, DC 20227; phone: (202) 874-6763; e-mail, melanie.rigney@fms.treas.gov. For a free subscription, please go to fmsapps.treas.gov/subscription/subscription.asp.

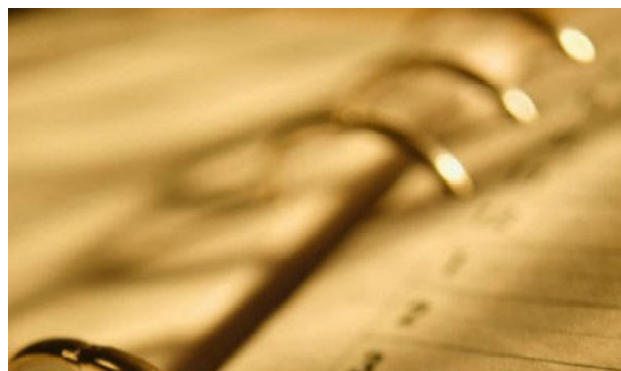
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Taxpayers who received an automatic four-month filing extension until August 15 and those granted an additional two-month extension to October 17 can use e-filing and direct deposit for their refunds. Since direct deposit gets refunds to taxpayers a week to 10 days earlier than a paper check in the mail, we expect there will be continued incremental growth in direct deposit refunds before the close of the tax filing season as well.

Taxpayers are reminded to use e-file when filing their 2006 tax returns, and to choose direct deposit for their refunds!

For more information about getting a tax refund by direct deposit, see fms.treas.gov/eft/promotional/ddtaxrefund.html. For general tax information, call IRS's toll-free help line at (800) 829-1040 or visit www.irs.gov. Taxpayers can learn about the status of their refunds by visiting www.irs.gov and (click on "Where's My Refund?") or by calling (800) 829-1954.



UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information about FMS events, please see www.fms.treas.gov/calendar.html.

Aug. 8: Year-End Closing Seminar, Bethesda, Md.

Aug. 9-11: FMS Annual Government Financial Management Conference, Bethesda, Md.

Aug. 16-17: Federal Agency Forum, Dallas, Texas.

Aug. 23-24: Federal Agency Forum, Denver, Colo.

Sept. 20-21: Debt Collection 101 Workshop, Chicago, Ill.

Sept. 22: Treasury Report on Receivables (TROR) Workshop, Chicago, Ill.